

INFO	LOG-00	EEB-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DOTE-00
	PERC-00	DS-00	FAAE-00	VCI-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00
	LAB-01	L-00	CAC-00	MOFM-00	MOF-00	VCIE-00	NSAE-00
	ISN-00	NSCE-00	OMB-00	NIMA-00	PA-00	PM-00	GIWI-00
	PRS-00	P-00	SGAC-00	ISNE-00	FMPC-00	SP-00	SSO-00
	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00	EVR-00	NCTC-00	IIP-00	PMB-00
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SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 000235

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/09/2019

TAGS: PREL MARR AO

SUBJECT: MIL-MIL MOU WITH ANGOLA: TAKING A BREATHER

REF: A. LUANDA 181

1B. LUANDA 107

1C. LUANDA 070

(U) Classified by Charge Jeff Hawkins, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C) Summary. With budgets tight and its international agenda as yet undefined, the Angolan Ministry of Defense has asked that we put on hold plans for a bilateral mil-mil memorandum of understanding. Vice Minister of Defense Ruffino told visiting DOD official Dan Pike and Charge that, despite the MOD's interest in deepening cooperation with the United States, his ministry was just not ready to proceed with the MOU. He thought a pause of a few months might leave the ministry better positioned to move forward. Further, he said that a GRA budget squeeze had led the MOD to "freeze" international cooperative exchanges, presumably including a planned August visit by a U.S. ship. In a subsequent meeting, Minister of External Relations dos Anjos confirmed that the Angolan military was restructuring and emphasized that this process would lead MOD to review cooperation in "this or that technical area." Neither Ruffino nor dos Anjos suggested that we stop our activities in other agreed upon areas of collaboration, and we will continue to move forward with these. End Summary.

12. (C) DOD Acting Principal Director for Africa Dan Pike traveled to Angola April 7-9 to begin discussions with the Angolan MOD on a possible military-military memorandum of understanding. Minister of Defense Paihama originally proposed the idea during the visit of DOD DAS Theresa Whelan in October 2008, and we have discussed this type of cooperation in numerous meetings with defense and other officials, including President dos Santos, since.

13. (C) In an April 8 meeting, however, Vice Minister of Defense Gaspar Ruffino told Pike, Charge and DATT that the Ministry now preferred to go slow on the agreement. The ministry recognized the "necessity of deepening relations" with the United States, he said, but certain "legislative and internal difficulties" prevented it from focusing on the MOU now. He emphasized that the Angolan military was still making the transition from a warfighting to a peacetime force, and the Armed Forces of Angola (FAA) could not focus on its international priorities until this was complete. He said, though, that the FAA reorganization was nearly finished, and Ruffino believed the process would end within the year. He suggested that the matter be taken up again then, "perhaps in three to six months or a little longer." Ruffino recognized that the "ball was now in MOD's court." As he had in an earlier meeting (ref A), Ruffino warned the ratification process - which could include the Ministry of Exterior Relations, the Council of Ministers, and parliament

- could be lengthy once a text was agreed upon.

¶4. (C) Ruffino noted the impact recent economic events had had on GRA budgets. Even the defense sector had suffered, he said, and this had led MOD to reconsider its internal and external engagements. Budget imperatives had led MOD to "freeze" a number of activities, to include visits and exchanges for some time. (Note: In a separate meeting with Pike and DATT, MOD International Relations Director Admiral Miao specifically cited a planned August ship visit as one that the Angolans would not be able to entertain for financial and resource reasons.)

¶5. (C) On April 8, FM Assuncao dos Anjos essentially confirmed MOD's decision to put the MOU on temporary hold in a meeting with Pike, Charge and DATT. When Charge raised the issue and asked for his views, dos Anjos emphasized that Angola was rebuilding its army for peace after decades of war and that this reorganization would take time. He said that MOD would tell us when it was opportune to revisit the MOU.

¶6. (C) Comment. We are disappointed by MOD's decision to put the MOU and some cooperation on hold. We are not sure why MOD has decided to take this course of action and are currently seeking input from other defense attaches to see whether they have had similar messages recently from MOD, or whether this is specific to the United States. While it is true that Angolan ministries have had to tighten their belts in the wake of a significant drop in GRA oil revenues, we do not understand why this would lead to a pause in discussions on the MOU. As Ruffino noted, the ball is now clearly in the Angolan court. Meanwhile, we will proceed with mil-mil cooperation in other agreed lanes: HIV/AIDS, English language instruction and maritime and airspace security. End Comment.

¶7. (U) Mr. Pike cleared this message.

HAWKINS